

Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AID-20 CCO-00 FBO-01 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NIC-01 NSC-10 SPC-03 OC-06 OPR-02 PA-04

USSS-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 SCA-01 A-01 OMB-01 SS-20 SY-10

NEA-11 SCS-03 PPT-02 COME-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 DRC-01 /168 W

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O R 292100Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6648

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

PORT OF SPAIN IMMEDIATE 1008

CINCLANZSFR POLAD

COMCARIBSEAFRON IMMEDIATE NIACT

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E.9. 11652: ./A

TAGS: GJ PINS

SUBJ: GRENADA SITREP 9

REF: BTN 0159

1. DEPUTY CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER HANCOCK, WHO JUST RETURNED FROM GRENADA TODAY (JANUARY 29), STATES SITUATION THERE HAS STEADILY DETERIORATED DURING PAST 48 HOURS. FOOD SHORTAGES, VIRTUAL ABSENCE OF POLICE, AND LACK OF POWER AND COMMUNICATIONS APPEAR TO BE ENCOURAGING FREE-LANCE LOOTING WHICH COULD EASILY SPREAD TO HOMES OF FOREIGN RESIDENTS, MOST OF WHOM RELATIVELY WELL STOCKED WITH FOOD AND OTHER ESSENTIALS. HANCOCK REPORTS GUN-TOTING LOOTERS ATTEMPTED BREAK INTO RIVIERA HOTEL, ADJACENT TO HOLIDAY INN, EVENING
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RANUARY 28. SOME SHOTS FIRED, BUT NO INJURIES OCCURRED.

LOOTERS MAY HAVE THOUGHT HOTEL EMPTY SINCE MANAGER HAD ANNOUNCED HE WAS CLOSING AND LEAVING ISLAND. ALL GUESTS AT RIVIERA HAD DEPARTED PRIOR TO INCIDENT, AND MANAGER LEFT JANUARY 29. LAST FOUR TOURISTS LEAVING HOLIDAY INN TODAY AND NO MORE BEING ACCEPTED. HOLIDAY INN HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY GOG AND ASKED TO REMAIN OPEN TO ACCOMMODATE GUESTS FOR INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS. GOG HAS IN TURN PROMISED MANAGER DIESEL FOR HOTEL'S GENERATOR AND PROPANE FOR COOKING. MANAGER ALSO FEELS SITUATION DETERIORATING RAPIDLY BUT FEELS COMPELLED TO REMAIN OPEN RATHER THAN RISK GOVERNMENT REPRISALS. GOG HAS ALSO PROMISED TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SECURITY.

2. HANCOCK ALSO REPORTS CRUSH AT AIRPORT MORNING JANUARY 29 WHEN, FOR FIRST TIME, NUMBER OF PERSONS SEEKING PASSAGE EXCEEDED AVAILABLE SPACES. MOST WERE GRENADIANS EVIDENTLY ALARMED BY DETERIORATING SECURITY AND FEARFUL OF FURTHER DISTURBANCES PRIOR TO OR DURING INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS. HANCOCK HIMSELF COMPELLED TO CHARTER AIRPLANE BACK TO BARBADOS. LIAT HAS NO PLANS FOR CURTAILING OR CANCELLING ITS PRESENT TWICE DAILY FLIGHTS OUT OF GRENADA.

3. JANUARY 28 REPORT FROM GRENADA PASSED TO EMBASSY BY UK HIGH COMMISSION ALSO INDICATES LOOTING SPREADING TO PRIVATE HOMES, AND SOME HOTELS DEFINITELY PLANNING TO CLOSE. BRITISH ALSO REPORT (MY REPORT RECEIVED FROM OTHER SOURCES) THAT PIPELINE FROM RESERVOIR IN ST. PAUL'S CARRYING WATER TO ST. GEORGE'S SABOTAGED NIGHT OF JANUARY 27.

4. HEADS OF GOVERNMENT FROM BARBADOS, GUYAYANA, TRINIDAD AND JAMAICA WHO MET HERE OVER WEEKEND ISSUED COMMUNIQUE JANUARY 28 EXPRESSING HOPE FOR "EARLY RESOLUTION OF PROBLEMS (IN GRENADA) ON A BASIS CONSISTENT WITH CONSTITUTIONAL PROPRIETY AND WITH RESPECT FOR FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS." COMMUNIQUE ADDED THAT INDEPENDENT COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEAN GOVERNMENTS "LOOKED FORWARD TO THE DAY WHEN GRENADA WILL PLAY ITS FULL PART AS AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER STATE OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY." COMMUNIQUE

APPARENTLY ONLY PUBLIC ACTION TAKEN BY HEADS OF GOVERNMENT FOLLOWING THEIR MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES WHO REPORTEDLY URGED THEM TO TAKE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHATEVER ACTION THEY COULD TO DIFFUSE SITUATION IN GRENADA IN VIEW OF ITS IMPACT ON OTHER CARIBBEAN TERRITORIES.

5. EMBOFFS MEETING JANUARY 30 WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF UK AND CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSIONS TO COORDINATE EVACUATION PLANS SHOULD THEY BECOME NECESSARY. POLOFF PLANNING TO RETURN TO GRENADA FEBRUARY 1 AND WILL STANDBY THROUGH INDEPENDENCE TO COORDINATE U.S. INDEPENDENCE DELEGATION AND/OR EVACUATION OF

USC'S, IF REQUIRED.

6. EMBASSY HAS INTERVIEWED NUMBER OF GRENADIANS WHO HAVE LEFT DURING PAST 48 HOURS WHO ALSO DESCRIBE SITUATION AS DETERIORATING RAPIDLY AND BELIEVE EVENTS HEADING TOWARD MAJOR CONFRONTATION BETWEEN PRO- AND ANTI-GOVERNMENT ELEMENTS DURING INDEPENDENCE WEEK. THEY CHARACTERIZE OPPOSITION'S MOOD AS INTENSELY BITTER AND THAT OF GAIRY AS VINDICTIVE AND UNPREDICTABLE. SOME CLAIMED FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE THAT OPPOSITION ELEMENTS ARMING FOR MAJOR BATTLE ONCE THEIR FAMILIES AND CLOSE RELATIVES SAFELY OUT OF THE ISLAND.

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